

I. PREFACE:

The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as passed by the 88th Congress, was devised to improve the quality of life for our Nation's underprivileged. This legislation and the nationwide activity which it has precipitated, represents what is perhaps the greatest effort in our history to extend the "American Dream" to all citizens. Our national concern for the plight of our underprivileged and poverty-stricken people is manifesting itself in vigorous programs in every urban center in the land. The City of Newark, New Jersey, is numbered among these urban centers, and Newark too, has a number of Federally-Sponsored programs in operation.

Our City's Federal programs, in conjunction with its own municipal agencies and the many County and State programs are all seeking to control and eliminate the conditions which plague and perpetuate our underprivileged citizenry - and they have achieved some successes.

While these opportunities and services are generally available, the Puerto Rican and other Spanish speaking segments of our City have not been able to take full advantage of them. As a result, the programs have not had significant impact or value to the Spanish Community. Existing programs lack the specialized efforts required to obtain the confidence and participation of this distinct ethnic group. They fail to offer the necessary preventive measures, as well as remedies,

19

to insure that results are not temporary and do not recognize the underprivileged Spanish-speaking people of Newark as a distinct ethnic group with special temporary handicaps.

Many agencies ostensibly created for their assistance cannot claim even one bi-lingual staff worker. As a result, the language barrier denies them access to these facilities. (We seem more intent on creating programs than making the programs created accessible to all). Confusion, red tape and lack of coordination among the agencies many times deter our Spanish speaking residents from seeking any assistance.

In addition, in an area so pregnant with facilities and services so sorely needed, there is no centralized agency which can reach the Spanish speaking community and provide badly needed information, counsel and assistance with any substantial success.

In a survey taken in March of this year, by the Program Development Committee of FOCUS, 200 Spanish-American families residing in Newark, were sampled to determine deficiencies in public facilities, need for the FOCUS-Newark Program, and general community attitudes. The survey reinforced the aforementioned factors and confirmed the validity basic FOCUS premises.

The following report outlines the special requirements of the Spanish American community and proposes a realistic and workable program which will maximize the influence of existing programs and promote successful participation of Spanish-Americans in the community.

III. STATUS OF THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY:

The City of Newark's Spanish speaking population numbers over 35,000 and with new arrivals, is rapidly increasing. More than 50% of this group is poverty-stricken and a large percentage are unemployed or under-employed. The significance of the unemployment rate for the city's future becomes more manifest when the median age of 21.6 years for the Spanish speaking male labor force is considered.

The following statistics were cited in the 1960 Census and in a report compiled by the Newark Human Rights Commission: the Puerto-Rican community enjoys a median income of \$3,665.00 while median income for the Newark metropolitan area is \$6,267.00; pays a median rent of \$68.00 as compared to median rent of the areas of \$85.00 (\$68.00 rent represents 22.1% of median income as compared to 16.2% of metropolitan median income at \$85.00); and knows that approximately 42% of his people live in "deteriorating housing".

Language barriers, cultural problems, problems of environmental adjustment and lack of skills or training, make it difficult for them to improve their socio-economic condition.

Fear, apathy, distrust and ignorance in the Spanish speaking community itself, have left virtually untapped, the area's resources for their protection and assistance. Public relations efforts to remove these negative conditions have been notably short-lived and grossly inadequate.

Victims of discrimination and exploitation, particularly in housing and employment, most of the Spanish speaking community is unfamiliar with their rights under Civil Rights legislation, unaware of the Legal Aid Society services except in criminal prosecutions and ignorant of the services provided by family counseling bureaus, the Small Business Administration government training and retraining programs and the many public health facilities available to them. Housing information, low interest loan programs and other opportunities which could play a vital role in their upward progress remain unknown or unused.

Yet a program to introduce the general community to Spanish Culture and promote assimilation and social acceptance, is non-existent. Social stigma and non-acceptance are being passed, yoke-like, to yet another generation of Spanish-Americans.

The social processes by which the Spanish Speaking community is gradually crystallizing into permanent indigent status, remain largely uninterrupted. To maintain that we already have programs underway, is to sweep 35,000 people under the rug. Fast community relations efforts to spur social progress have produced only slogans.

III. PROPOSAL:

In order to reverse the poverty cycle of the Spanish speaking residents of Newark, New Jersey, a proposal for the creation of a program to coordinate existing social facilities, services and opportunities in a comprehensive Orientation Center for Spanish speaking residents is offered.

PROGRAM TITLE:

-Field Orientation Center for
Underprivileged Spanish-Americans
of Newark, New Jersey.

PROGRAM ACRONYM:

-F.O.C.U.S. - Newark
-O.E.O.

INITIATED BY:

-Representatives of the Spanish
Community of Newark, New Jersey.

MEETING AT:

-PERPETUO SOCORRO Spanish Center
196 Broad Street, Newark, New Jersey.

SPONSORED BY:

-Mt. Carmel Guild of the R.C.
Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey
and the Human Rights Commission,
Office of the Mayor, Newark,
New Jersey.

Funding is hereby requested in accordance with TITLE 2, Section 207 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, to implement the hereinafter described program.

V. GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES OF FOCUS:

The proposed Orientation Center, which will hereinafter be referred to as FOCUS--NEWARK, is fundamentally an information and orientation agency for Spanish speaking residents, however, it will not exclude other groups seeking its services. Its bilingual staff of qualified personnel will be drawn largely from the Spanish speaking community itself, and will operate in inter-departmentalized jurisdictions through Divisions of Education and Vocational Services; Housing; Legal Aid; Health and Welfare.

The staff of each division will disseminate information, evaluate specific needs of applicants in areas of their respective jurisdictions, refer cases to other divisions for simultaneous action on concurrent problems, provide counsel and community orientation, maintain contact and cooperative relationships with public and private agencies of their jurisdiction, maintain case files for control and follow-up on individual progress.

In addition to its center-based activities, FOCUS will engage in extensive public relations activity designed to introduce the Spanish people and culture to city residents, labor councils, business leaders and civic representatives. The goal of this public relations activity will be to develop the meaningful cooperation of business and labor in FOCUS PROGRAMS and

to create favorable opinion and support for its services among the city's general population and in the Spanish-American community itself.

The pathologies of Poverty and its problems cannot be excised permanently by autonomous agencies operating in exclusive jurisdictions. They attempt to deal with conveniently categorized problems as if they were independent conditions and non-casual in their relationship to the total problem of the individual. The total approach of FOCUS- Newark maximizes the possibility for decisive elimination of Spanish-American poverty and will insure maximum utilization of existing programs.

The primary objective of FOCUS's Multi-phased program is to reverse the poverty cycle of the city's Spanish speaking residents. Toward that end, its more immediate objectives are to remove the root causes of the special, temporary handicaps which hamper their progress, through programs of prevention, as well as remedy; to provide a comprehensive program of assistance for each applicant through coordination and integration of public services, selected to meet each applicant's particular needs; and to generate goal consciousness and a sincere desire for self-improvement among the Spanish speaking through continuing and readily accessible assistance.

Evaluation of each division's activities and progress will be conducted by the Directors of the program through case record review, conferences with Division Counselors, community interviews and meetings, progress checks on applicants who have received aid and other experiential information recieved by the Associate Director through his public relations activities. Each phase of the program will undergo frequent and thorough examination.

The fundamental premise of FOCUS NEWARK's program is, that the whole is not greater than the sum of its parts. Poverty is an aggregation of diverse factors which, if isolated individually and treated simultaneously, can be eliminated. The special temporary handicaps of the Spanish speaking people of Newark can be overcome.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF FOCUS:

A) General Operational Procedures:

FOCUS-NEWARK programs will be brought to the attention of the community by public relations activities. The Associate Director will be responsible for the publicity of FOCUS programs and achievements; he will develop program materials, literature and mailing pieces, place press releases in the City's newspapers and other media, make personal contact with municipal employee, clergymen and Church groups, leaders of the Spanish community and representatives of business and labor. Also, public facilities will be encouraged to refer applicants to FOCUS.

In addition, FOCUS field operations will be undertaken by a team of community workers under the supervision of the Program Directors and Counselors. Their field workers will interview members of the Spanish community; apprise them of the assistance FOCUS can provide and establish appointments when they may come to the Center; conduct progress checks on applicants who have received aid; accompany applicants to public facilities when necessary and, in general, engage in any activities requiring direct home visitation.

During the activation phase of the program, and while the Divisions begin operation, a team of community workers will take a census and survey of the Spanish community in order that FOCUS may begin with current information on income, family units, housing, educational statuses, employment and other areas in which it will be equipped to provide assistance. With such additional information at its disposal, FOCUS will be able to direct its attentions not only to the Spanish community in general, but also to each family unit in it. Initial casework allocations for each division will be made from this store of information. Division Counselors will supplement their respective programs on receipt of their field survey data sheets. Members of the Spanish community who could benefit from FOCUS services, will be contacted immediately thereafter and effective operation will be attained with almost no delay after program activation.

FOCUS Field efforts will play a significant role in the success of the program and home visitations will be conducted on a continuous basis, in addition to center-based activities.

FOCUS functions and jurisdictions have been organized into 5 main areas of orientation. These jurisdictions have been departmentalized as Divisions of: 1) Vocation and Education, 2) Legal Aid, 3) Housing, 4) Health and 5) Welfare, each having its own counselor. The following general procedures will apply to the operation of all five divisions in processing applicants.

1. Initially, a clerical staff will receive and interview each applicant. From the information received in the interview, each case would be forwarded to the appropriate Division. The problem needing most immediate solution would be handled first, subsequent referral to other jurisdictions would be determined by the Counselor to whom the case was initially referred.

2. The Division Counselor will review the case record obtained from the interviewer, and familiarize himself with the areas of the case he will assume.

3. The Division Counselor will interview the applicant for supplementary information, to gain further insight into the problem.

4. The Counselor would then evaluate specific needs and determine means of solution. The Counselor will refer the case and direct applicants to the proper public or private agency and, in cases where there is a language barrier, will arrange for a bi-lingual staff worker to accompany the applicant.

5. The case would then be referred to any other Division which could be of assistance.

6. A case history will be kept on file and each successive counselor involved in the case would determine further dispositions. Each Counselor will follow-up and make progress checks on his area of jurisdiction in the case.

Appropriate information describing services performed and any other data necessary for accurate program evaluation, will be provided by all Division Counselors on a regular monthly basis for examination by the Executive and Associate Directors, and the Director of Personnel.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF FOCUS

B. Program Divisions:

The five divisions of FOCUS each have specific and distinct areas of responsibility yet act inter-dependantly. The overall philosophy of FOCUS is evident in this interaction.

A rent problem, a case involving serious sickness or disability or an employment problem is not an autonomous clinical entity. It is but a facet of a greater human problem and must be considered in the total poverty picture which an applicant for aid presents. For this over-riding consideration, FOCUS-NEWARK Division are organized as follows:

1. VOCATION AND EDUCATION DIVISION:

These two areas will be joined in concert to obtain vocational placements and for training of applicants who are unemployed, under-employed or who wish to improve themselves by acquiring a new trade or skill, or augment their formal education.

In order to assure fulfillment of these objectives, this Division will be headed by an Educational and Vocational Counselor. The Counselor will establish and maintain close relationships with all agencies in his field. It will be his task to determine needs, aptitudes and abilities of applicants for employment or education and to refer cases to public and private vocational and educational institutions.

The Counselor will be in contact with employment services, trade counsels, business establishments, the Rehabilitation Commission, the Small Business Administration and the Civil Service Commission, in order to facilitate job placement.

In cases where formal education is indicated, desired or required, the Counselor will refer the applicant to the proper educational institution. Should vocational training be required referrals will be made to public vocational schools, private trade schools and trade counsels which have expressed a willingness to cooperate. In all cases, a followup study will be conducted by the Division. Other factors of a case requiring assistance will be referred to the appropriate Division.

The Division offers the Spanish community the prospect of immediate socio-economic improvement. Aside from the employment and educational opportunities which it will develop, this division will provide the younger members of the community with an even more significant opportunity and chance to win a positive and productive future.

2. LEGAL AID DIVISION:

The Legal Aid Division will consist of a Legal Aid Counselor and clerical staff. The Counselor will review each case referred to him to determine the nature of legal assistance required, establish the financial status of each applicant, and arrange for appropriate recursive action.

The Legal Aid Counselor will direct the case to the Legal Aid Society or to private counsel or may personally assist the applicant in situations not requiring litigations or criminal defense.

The Division will maintain contact with cooperating private attorneys and will advise cases as to their legal rights and obligations in such diverse areas as personal loans, tenancies, divorce, Motor Vehicle regulations, insurance and the most common laws regulating public assistance and housing.

The Division will also provide information regarding fraud, personal income taxes, pay garnishing, Social Security, bail bonds, Commercial Credit, banking and Medicare provisions. The Division will prepare and disseminate literature and will hold meetings and seminars on subjects of community importance.

Voter registration will also be under the jurisdiction of the Legal Aid Division. As political participation is a prerequisite to real socio-economic progress, the Division will offer information on voting, voter registration requirements, election laws, the operations of government, political rights and privileges and participation in local, state and federal government. Increasing the civic and political participation of the Spanish community is an important aspect of the over-all FOCUS program and will complement and give vital support to progress gained in other areas.

The Legal Aid Division will present itself to applicants as a source of counsel, advice, information and contact with the legal profession in general. The Division will not represent any applicant nor will it charge or accept fees for it's services. It will act as a public source of recourse and assistance and will provide a reliable service for the Spanish Speaking community when legal questions arise.

3. HOUSING DIVISION:

The Housing Division will consist of a Housing Counselor and the Center's clerical staff. The functions of this Division, generally stated, will be to place applicants in suitable housing commensurate with their income, relocate applicants where required and maintain a system for housing complaints and problem solving.

In addition, the Housing Division will provide the Associate Director with information and data for public and community relations projects, as will the other divisions. Bringing the more prevalent housing problems, violations and complaints to the attention of the general public and to Municipal officials, will generate substantial progress toward alleviation and removal of these conditions

The Division will locate rental housing, advise applicants of tenancy rights and obligations, receive complaints arising from public and private housing, assist in lease or purchase of housing and refer applicants directly to personnel, Divisions or agencies for remedy, or to the Legal Aid Division, if necessary. Liaison between the Division and The Newark Housing Authority and related County Agencies, will be affected to facilitate special housing requirements for the elderly, the infirm, large families, emergency and family placement, relocation and the like.

Cases presenting problems or jurisdiction, concurrent with other Divisions, will be handled jointly by them or referred to the Division of greatest jurisdiction.

4. WELFARE DIVISION:

The Welfare Division will have a Welfare Counselor and staff of social workers. The Division will maintain general offices in the Center and provide 6 staff community workers who, in addition to center-based duties, will extend division services into the field through home visitations for investigations, introduction of FOCUS and its services and case follow-ups.

This Division will make every effort to help the applicant secure immediate assistance from public or private welfare agencies, and to help applicants reclaim their independence from welfare assistance by providing, through other FOCUS Divisions, ways and means of achieving economic and human self-sufficiency.

The Welfare Division and the Education and Vocation Division will, together provide needed welfare aid and long-range job placement or re-training assistance to alleviate economic distress and simultaneously, provide avenues for employment and educational advancement. Through counseling of these Divisions, recipients of Welfare funds will be encouraged and helped to determine specific intelligent personal goals and to initiate appropriate action for their attainment. Success orientation is vital to genuine self-improvement, happiness and continuing personal progress and will be the major emphasis of this Division.

The Division will also provide information, literature and orientation in such areas as unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation, disability assistance, old age assistance, aid to the mentally and physically handicapped and aid to dependant children. Public meetings and seminars are also planned and the orientation of younger people of working age will be emphasized.

VI. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

C. SUMMARY

The comprehensive and vital services outlined in this proposal, and to be offered by FOCUS-NEWARK, will enable it to deal with the entire gamut of problems which an applicant for assistance might present.

FOCUS will have strong ties with the Spanish speaking community through its Personnel and orientation, and will not have the inherent drawbacks of public agencies resulting from language barriers, red-tape, uncoordinated services, and impersonality which deter the Spanish community from participating in their programs.

FOCUS community conferences, meetings, seminars and drives; visiting bi-lingual personnel; and the unique character of FOCUS itself, will make the proposed program a significant motivating force in the Spanish-American community.

In short, FOCUS-NEWARK will be an orientation Center expressly for Spanish-speaking residents of Newark- a Center where these people will turn for recourse and reliable aid, knowing that FOCUS understands, wants to help and can actually provide the assistance they need.

Initial duration of the program will be one year. At the year's end, evaluations will determine the future of the program. Statistics and case records will be reviewed and analyzed to determine needs for program adjustment, expansion and emphasis.

Within 30 days of the approval date, the program will be activated and in full operation. The Spanish-American residents of Newark eagerly await implementation of this program; they feel it is their's.

VII. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

A) BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Administration of the FOCUS-NEWARK program will be effected by the Board of Directors acting through executive personnel-and to further assure that FOCUS' and i
activity accurately reflects the needs and aspirations of the community it serves. Board membership will be fixed. Quotas have been established by the Program Development Committee which provide a balanced cross-section of community interests. These quotas are translated into three major membership categories:

1. Ex-officio Members
2. Spanish and Non-Spanish Members -at- Large
3. Resident Representatives of the Spanish Community.

These groups will have a total membership of 85, distributed according to the following tables.